

1 Sophie, our IEC!

2 Scripture

- Does not wisdom call out? Does not understanding raise her voice? On the heights along the way, where the paths meet, she takes her stand; beside the gates leading into the city, at the entrances, she cries aloud: “To you, O men, I call out; I raise my voice to all mankind.” (Prov 8:1–4 NIV)

3 Scripture

- “Now then, my sons, listen to me; blessed are those who keep my ways. Listen to my instruction and be wise; do not ignore it.” (Prov 8:32–33 NIV)
- “Blessed is the man who listens to me, watching daily at my doors, waiting at my doorway.” (Prov 8:34 NIV)
- “For whoever finds me finds life and receives favor from the LORD.” (Prov 8:35 NIV)
- “But whoever fails to find me harms himself; all who hate me love death.” (Prov 8:36 NIV)

4 Introduction

- Getting into the college of our choice can be quite an arduous task.
- At the most academically competitive schools, thousands of students apply, and only a handful are accepted.

5 Introduction

- If your first choice is Stanford, for example, it’s going to be very difficult to get in.
- They accept only 5.1 percent of their applicants.
- That’s one acceptance for every 20 applications!

6 Introduction

- Harvard and Yale are a little easier, accepting 6 percent of their applicants.
- The Massachusetts Institute of Technology accepts only 8 percent of applicants.
- California Institute of Technology, only 9 percent.

7 Introduction

- Vanderbilt University is 8.8 percent.
- Notre Dame is 21 percent.
- University of Kentucky is 68.6 percent.
- Asbury University is 68.8 percent.
- University of Louisville is 74 percent.

8 Prestigious University

- For a growing number of occupations, a college education is vitally important, and a degree from a prestigious university can open doors to employment upon graduation, and networking advantages for advancement all the way to retirement.
- At least, this is the perception of many parents who want their child to have the best opportunity to succeed.
- They believe, in other words, that getting into the "right" college can be an important first step toward a successful lifelong journey.

9 IECs

- That's why, to improve their child's chances of acceptance from the institution of their choice, some parents are employing the services of an independent educational consultant (IEC).
- These IECs offer a variety of services for high school students.

10 IECs

- Many assist with the application process by offering
 - coaching in the writing of the dreaded application essay,
 - preparing for the anxiety-ridden admissions interview, and
 - helping students assemble a complete and thorough application packet.

11 IECs

- Others, hired before the student's junior year of high school, can provide tutoring for the SAT and ACT tests.
- Still others help students select
 - high school courses and extra-curricular activities,
 - clubs and other associations that may help bolster a college application.

12 IECs

- These services, as one might expect, can be pricey.
 - Fees for independent educational consultants can range from about \$1,000 to over \$10,000, depending upon their experience and services offered.
 - Some parents find the fees worth paying to help their child receive the advantage of the "right" degree from the "right" college to help them succeed for the rest of their lives.

13 IEC

- So then, wouldn't it be nice to have an independent educational consultant for our other moments in life?

- In our professional lives, we could use someone coaching us prior to a job interview and then how to climb the ladder of corporate success.
- In our private lives, we could get counseling on how to select a good mate and then how to raise a family.
- In our spiritual lives, we could have someone to come and stand along side of us helping us to keep a solid relationship with the Lord, when the world around us is falling apart.

14 **Sophie (Wisdom)**

- The good news is that we already have an IEC.
- Her name is Sophie, and she's our personal IEC for life.
- In the Bible she is known as wisdom and along with understanding she was with God at the beginning of creation.

15 **Sophie's Availability**

- Unlike other educational consultants, Sophie is always available, answering whenever we call.
 - When we need to see the doctor it may take weeks to get an appointment.
 - Call for tech support on anything we're likely to be put on hold for several minutes.
 - Contact our lawyer or banker we may be forwarded to voicemail and our calls may not be returned for hours or days.

16 **Sophie's Resume**

- Sophie is different.
 - She is already there waiting on us.
 - As the Scripture says, If any of you is lacking in wisdom, ask God, who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly, and it will be given you. (James 1:5).

17 **Sophie's Virtues**

- When things are going well, and we are comfortably walking the heights of life, she is there.
- When we find ourselves at a crossroads, she is there.
- When we are standing at the threshold of something new, Sophie is there to guide and direct us.
- There's no application process or prerequisites that need to be met.

18 **Sophie's Virtues**

- Some of the best IECs will not help just anyone.

- Their services are only available to the best students in the class.
- Even in the area of employment, job counselors may not help those who don't have good résumés.
- Same with marriage counselors, if a marriage seems hopeless, they'll decline further help.

19 Sophie's Virtues

- This will never happen with Sophie.
- She is ready to consult for us, no matter who we are, where we come from, or what we are going through.
- Sophie calls out to all people and all who listen and follow her advice will be blessed.

20 Where Does Sophie Speak?

- As the Scripture says, Wisdom calls aloud in the street, she raises her voice in the public squares; at the head of the noisy streets she cries out, in the gateways of the city she makes her speech. (Prov 1:20–21 NIV)
- I don't know if you catch this or not but where does Sophie make her speech?
- Does she speak in the "quite places" or the "busy & noisy" places of our lives.
- The truth of the matter is she speaks everywhere and all the time and we don't have to be a super Christian or hermit to benefit from her.

21 Sophie's Help

- She's there to help when . . .
 - We're trying to fix dinner and feed the kids.
 - We're trying to balance our checkbook and pay the bills.
 - The boss is breathing down our necks and deadlines are to be met.
 - We come back from the doctor with bad news and we don't know which way to turn.
 - We need to know how to live a godly life in an ungodly world.

22 Listen to Sophie

- Nevertheless, when Sophie speaks, we'll need to listen.
 - "For the waywardness of the simple will kill them, and the complacency of fools will destroy them; but whoever listens to me will live in safety and be at ease, without fear of harm." (Prov 1:32–33 NIV)
 - "To you, O men, I call out; I raise my voice to all mankind. You who are simple, gain prudence; you who are foolish, gain understanding. Listen, for I have worthy things to say; I open my lips to speak what is right." (Prov 8:4–6 NIV)

23 Listen to Sophie

- “Now then, my sons, listen to me; blessed are those who keep my ways.” (Prov 8:32 NIV)
- “Listen to my instruction and be wise; do not ignore it.” (Prov 8:33 NIV)
- “Blessed is the man who listens to me, watching daily at my doors, waiting at my doorway.” (Prov 8:34 NIV)

24 The Blessings of Sophie

- I love those who love me, and those who seek me find me. (Prov 8:17 NIV)
- With me are riches and honor, enduring wealth and prosperity. (Prov 8:18 NIV)
- My fruit is better than fine gold; what I yield surpasses choice silver. (Prov 8:19 NIV)
- I walk in the way of righteousness, along the paths of justice, bestowing wealth on those who love me and making their treasuries full. (Prov 8:20–21 NIV)

25 Conclusion

- So then, among the hustle and bustle of life, who are we really listening to?
 - Are we listening to our fears, worries, or anxieties?
 - Are we listening to the spirit of this world?
 - Or are we listening to the Holy Spirit—Spirit of Truth (Sophie)?
- For if we listen to Sophie, she will always lead us to “green pastures along quiet waters.”
- The choice is up to us. If we listen we will be blessed, but if we ignore her, we will only have one person to blame.

26 Conclusion

- Therefore, let us not be wise in our own eyes.
- As the Bible says, Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him. (Prov 26:12 NIV)
- So the, let us, “Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.” (Prov 3:5–6 NIV)